

In the Drawings:

The attached drawing sheet includes changes to FIGs. 5 and 6. Please replace the previously submitted FIGs. 5 and 6 with the attached replacement FIGs. 5 and 6.

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, FIGs. 5 and 6 are designated as "Prior Art", as suggested by the Examiner. For this reason, withdrawal of the objection the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(2) as being anticipated by Ashley, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,962,587). In response, Applicants amended independent claims 1 and 3 to clarify that the maximum outer diameter of the inner molding roller is substantially the same as the inner diameter of the tubular blank. Amended claims 1 and 3 also use molding surfaces of the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller in which a protruding curved part and a recess curved part are curved to each other in a reverse relationship and are continuous in the circumferential direction, wherein the circumferential wall of the tubular blank is pressed between the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection based on these amendments.

Ashley is directed to a method of making a wheel rim. Ashley has a forming roller 37 and a mandrel 25 that fail to have molding surfaces that have a protruding curved part and a recess curved part on the respective outer circumferential surfaces that are curved to each other in a reverse relationship and are circumferentially continuous. In Ashley, an inboard leg 18 of a preform 10 is stretched in a flat manner only in an axial direction on the mandrel 25, and this is not that of a protruding part which is formed continuously in a circumferential direction on a circumferential wall of the perform 10. If, with use of the performing roller 37 of Ashley a protruding part is to be formed continuously in the

circumferential direction on the circumferential wall of the preform 10, then the forming roller 37 must be moved in an axial direction. However, performing this procedure results in dimensional errors, which can easily happen and results in it being difficult to form a protruding part of uniform quality.

In contrast, the present invention uses the molding surfaces of the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller, wherein a protruding curved part and a recessed curved part are curved to each other in a reverse relationship and are continuous in the circumferential direction. Therefore, the circumferential wall of the tubular blank is pressed between the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller, whereby the protruding part can be precisely formed continuously in the circumferential direction on the circumferential wall of the tubular blank. In the present invention, no movement in an axial direction of the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller are needed, and therefore dimensional errors are prevented and a protruding part can be formed precisely and uniformly in quality,

Additionally, the maximum outer diameter of the inner molding roller is substantially the same as the inner diameter of the tubular blank in the present invention. Accordingly, the inner circumferential surface of the tubular blank can be stably supported over the whole periphery in the circumferential direction. Thus, vibration of the tubular blank is damped during processing and dimensional precision can be further enhanced.

On a support body for a run flat formed according to the present invention, an enormous external force is applied when the tire is punctured. Accordingly, high reliability is required and it is necessary to make the circumferentially continuous protruding curved part

uniform in quality. Ashley makes it hard to achieve consistent quality that is required for a support body for a run flat, unlike the present invention. For all these reasons, and in particular because Ashley fails to disclose (or suggest) the features now recited in the amended claims, withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of claims 1-4 and 6 is respectfully requested.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashley, and further in view of Luedi (U.S. Patent No. 4,050,135). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons recited above with respect to the rejection of independent claims 1 and 3.

The deficiencies of Ashley are noted above. Luedi is merely cited for teaching a structure wherein the inner molding roller adopts a structure that allows the roller to shrink in a radial direction. However, Luedi fails to overcome the deficiencies of Ashley, and in particular, to teach that the maximum outer diameter of the inner molding roller is substantially the same as the inner diameter of the tubular blank, and wherein using molding surfaces of the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller in which a protruding curved part and a recess curved part are curved to each other in a reverse relationship and are continuous in the circumferential direction, the circumferential wall of the tubular blank being pressed between the inner molding roller and the outer molding roller. For this reason, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of claim 5 is respectfully requested.

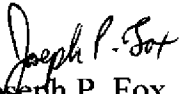
For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

If a Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response is required to make the attached response timely, it is hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response in the above-identified application for the period required to make the attached response timely. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 07-2069.

Respectfully submitted,

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